



DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

A brief description of an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is set forth herein in sufficient detail to allow a person skilled in the art to understand the operation and fully utilize the invention. The numbered parts of the description refer to the parts identified in the attached figures in which the parts bear like numerals throughout the invention.

Referring to Figure 1, the device 10 is shown inserted into the hair 12 of an individual 14. Note that the hair is pulled tightly against the head of an individual 14, and the balance of the hair 12 is contained within the device 10.

Referring to Figure 2, the preferred embodiment of the device is shown in which the device is comprised of opposing halves 16 and 18, wherein each half includes semicircular half 11, 11a at one end of the body. The opposing halves have multiple prongs 24 which are forced between the strands of hair to hold the device in the hair when the device is moved to a closed position. In the embodiment depicted in Fig. 2, opposing halves are rotatably connected by hinge 20. Interlocking ends 22 of opposing halves 16 and 18 secure the device when the device is in a closed position. In the closed position of the device 10, the balance of the hair 12 is contained within opposing halves 16 and 18. Multiple cutouts 26 in opposing halves create an artistic pattern on device 10.

Referring to Fig. 3, an alternative embodiment of the device is shown in which body 34 contains and protects the hair. In this embodiment there is but one circumferential flange 13 and no opposing halves at one end of the body. Removable opposing combs 60 have multiple prongs 30 which are inserted into holes 32 in body 34 capture the hair in the device. Opposing combs 60 may be utilized to enhance the

aesthetic appearance of the device forming them of contrasting or bright colors and through the inclusion of artistic features on the portion of opposing combs which is visible outside body 34. Multiple cutouts different shape than cutouts 26 may be utilized to create a variety of artistic appearances for the device.

Referring to Figure 4, an alternative embodiment of the device is shown in which body 61 is secured in the hair using U shaped structure 36. Like Fig. 3 there is but one circumferential flange 15, except that there is a small space separating the ends of this flange. By using the spaced legs 38 of the U-shaped structure, the ends of the circumferential flange are tied together, wherein the legs are inserted through holes 40 in the body 61 and engage 42 formed in the surface of body 61 opposite to holes 40.

Referring to Fig. 5, the preferred embodiment of the invention previously depicted in Fig. 2, is shown with arrows included to show the movement of opposing halves 16 and 18 when the device is moved from a closed position shown to an open position. To open the device, the interlocking features 22 of opposing halves 16 and 18 are disengaged and opposing halves 16 and 18 are rotated about hinge 20 as shown by the arrows in open position.

Referring to Fig. 6, an alternative embodiment of the invention is shown with arrows included to show the movement of opposing halves 16 and 18 when the device is moved from an open position to a closed position. In the case shown, to close the device male features 62 of opposing half 16 are inserted into female features 63 simultaneously at both side and opposing halves 16 and 18 are held in the closed position by engagement of protrusions 64 of male features 62 with opening 65 of opposing half 18. (Note again the semicircular flanges of Fig's 5 and 6.) Further, although it is not shown in Fig. 6, the device can be opened and

closed much like the device of Fig. 5 by disengaging protrusions 64 of male feature 62 from openings 65 at a single end of opposing half 16. The device is then opened by merely rotating opposing halves 16 and 18 to an open position utilizing the engaged male feature 62 and female feature 63 at the opposite end of opposing half 16 as a hinge.

The device can be manufactured from a number of semi-rigid materials. The dimensions of the opposing halves 16 and 18 can be made larger or smaller to accommodate larger or smaller amounts of hair depending upon hairstyle and quantity of hair protected.

From the foregoing it is readily apparent that a useful embodiment of the present invention has herein been described and illustrated which fulfills all of the aforestated objectives in a remarkably unexpected fashion. It is of course understood that such modifications, alterations and adaptations as may readily occur to the artisan confronted with this disclosure are intended within the spirit of this disclosure which is limited only by the scope of the claims appended hereto.